



# The LINK

for Child Care Professionals



Winter 2004

## Kids, TV, and Violence *A Clear Connection*

By Leslie Edwards-Hill  
Southwest Regional Trainer for Division  
of Child Care and Early Learning



Did you ever wonder, as a caregiver, what effect TV viewing has on young children's behavior? Does the growing violence of kids and youth concern you? There is a clear connection between TV viewing and aggressive or violent behavior in children. More than three thousand research studies over the past 40 years have demonstrated this to be true.

There is a stronger relationship between watching media violence and aggressive behavior than there is between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. The link is stronger than between calcium intake and bone mass. Yet the public in general does not seem to be very concerned about the amount of TV kids continue to watch.

Even newborns imitate what they see around them. Have you ever seen a young child copy something you said or did, even though you didn't realize at the time that the child had observed it? When kids watch TV, they are watching violent programming – up to 95 acts of violence per hour in some shows. They typically imitate that behavior.

Young children can't tell the difference between reality and fantasy – what's real and what is not. That's why it is so important to limit the amount of television that children watch. A new study released in October 2003 by the Kaiser Family Foundation revealed that 36 percent of all children ages 0-6 had a TV in their bedrooms. That was in addition

to the family television. Yet, when a child is in his own bedroom, the adult has no control over what the child watches!

As a child care provider, you play a very important role in how the young children you care for each day grow and develop. Television programs developed specifically for children, such as cartoons, contain more violence than adult programming. There are five different types of children's programming. They are:

- Slapstick programs, such as Bugs Bunny and Roadrunner, which show violence as funny and don't show the real nature of harm to the victim.
- Superhero cartoons, such as Spiderman, in which violence seems glamorous because the perpetrator is a hero.
- Mystery/adventure cartoons, like Scooby-Doo, which have violence in them but are not dominated by it.
- Social relationship programs, such as Care Bears, which have less violence. When there is aggression it is less dangerous and the consequences are sanitized or made to seem less significant than in real life.

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- The least violent type of children's programming is the magazine show. Sesame Street is a good example of a magazine-type show.

Watching too much violent TV has several other bad effects on young children. It increases aggression and makes them think that violence is an acceptable way to solve problems. It also makes them less sensitive to the pain of others as a result of the violence. Finally, it makes kids think that the world is a mean and scary place. None of this contributes in a positive way to their healthy development.

What can you do as a child care provider to help counter the ill effects of too much TV? You can follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which advises no more than 1-2 hours per day of TV viewing for young children. You can be aware that most cartoons contain a great deal of violence. You can model pro-social and positive ways of resolving differences. You can monitor the shows they watch.

You are a very important person in the lives of the young children you care for. When you protect them from watching too much TV and model positive problem-solving skills, you are helping to safeguard the next generation.

## The LINK

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## Olympia LINK

*By Rachael Langen, Director  
of the Division of Child Care  
and Early Learning*

### DCCEL Hiring More Licensors

As part of the effort to improve the quality of child care in Washington, the Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL) is hiring more child care center and family home licensors.

The current ratios of licensor to homes and centers is high throughout the state so hiring more licensors should reduce the licensor's workload and allow them to increase the frequency of monitoring visits. The plan is to hire 14.5 licensors statewide as well as 1.5 support staff, two licensing supervisors, 1.5 health specialists and a quarter-time military certifier.

Currently, there is one licensor for every 155 child care homes and one licensor for every 83 child care centers in Washington. We decided, based on national research and input from non-profit partner organizations like the state Resource and Referral networks and the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children (WAEYC), that decreasing licensor caseloads was one method of improving the quality of child care in Washington.

By increasing the number of licensors, we can begin to decrease licensor's caseloads, permitting greater ongoing monitoring activities and helping providers increase the quality of their care. The goal is to have one

licensor for every 140 family child care homes and one licensor for every 65 centers. To accomplish this, we are using a portion of the federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) to fund these new hires. By mandate, CCDF funds must be used to improve access to and the quality of child care. Quality of care will be improved through increased monitoring of existing centers and homes.

The Eastern region is scheduled for 5.5 new licensors: one in Spokane, 1.5 in Wenatchee, one in the Tri-Cities, and two in Yakima. The Northwest region is scheduled for five more licensors: a half-time licensor in Bellevue, two in Seattle, 1.5 in Everett, and one in Mt. Vernon. The Southwest region is scheduled for four more licensors: a half-time licensor in Bremerton, 1.5 in Tacoma, one in Tumwater, and one in Vancouver.

More monitoring visits to existing facilities is a must. DCCEL policy requires that, at a minimum, licensors must monitor child care centers once every 12 months and family homes once every 18 months. At our current staffing level we're hard pressed to meet these minimum requirements. I'm hoping that more licensors will allow us to meet and improve upon these requirements.



# New Regional Trainers Hired

*Laura Dallison, DCCEL Quality Assurance and Training Administrator*

The DCCEL Quality Assurance & Training Unit is pleased to announce the appointment of three regional trainers. With Marge Johnson, acting lead program manager, the trainers will form a team to deliver statewide training and mentoring to licensing staff, coordinate with DCCEL management to assess other training needs to meet licensing goals, provide subsidy training to providers and much more. The implementation of the DCCEL Staff Development System is underway!

**Please welcome:**

***Eastern Region: Carissa Dore***

Carissa brings a variety of experience and education to this position. Besides licensing child care, Carissa was the director/program manager of child care centers and worked as a Child Protective Services investigator. Throughout her

career, Carissa has made a point of sharing her knowledge and experience in the community, presenting at numerous conferences and to other organizations. Recently Carissa has been serving as the Academy Field Component Instructor for the Children's Administration training program. She is stationed in Spokane and her phone number is (509) 363-3301.

***Northwest Region: Jim Teeters***

Anyone who has worked for DCCEL for very long has attended training by Jim, and left informed, enthused and empowered. While working as a family child care licenser and child care complaint investigator, Jim has been a constant voice in DCCEL for a relevant training system for child care licensors. Also, Jim has published a book on teaching adults, and for the past 40 years has trained

adults on a variety of subjects. Jim will bring tremendous knowledge and dedication to the DCCEL Staff Development System. He is located in the Kent office and can be reached at (253) 372-6017.

***Southwest Region: Leslie Edwards-Hill***

Leslie brings a plethora of experience and wisdom to this position. She has operated her own family child care, worked as a family child care licenser, center licenser and program manager for licensing, policy, and quality assurance. She has managed contracts, public disclosure and has been the legislative liaison for child care. Besides all this, Leslie taught parent education and was the staff trainer for King County child care centers for eight years! Leslie is renowned for her attention to detail and ability to manage many projects at the same time. Currently, she is attending Chapman University to complete her master's degree in Organizational Leadership. Leslie is located in Olympia and can be reached at (360) 725-6670.

## The New DCCEL Training System The View from the Southwest Region

*By Leslie Edwards-Hill, DCCEL Southwest Regional Trainer*

We are fortunate to be developing a DCCEL staff training system in this state. An important goal of the system is to help the licensors achieve more consistency in practice and a common understanding of the job requirements. Linda Kalinowski, Field Manager for the Southwest Region, and the supervisors have been extremely supportive of the new training system.

The training system has been "under construction" for several years. Prior to the creation of the Division, in July 2001, licensors received training from the Children's Administration Academy, with a week devoted to licensing issues. A statewide staff development team conducted a staff survey in 2000 and made training recommendations to the new division. These recommendations have resulted in the creation of a core licensing curriculum for licensors. This training system was launched at the DCCEL conference in October 2003, with new and experienced licensors receiving the same training on ethics.

SW region licensors and some support staff received training on the new complaint policy in December. Complaint investigation process training is scheduled for the first quarter of 2004. As we bring new staff on board, the training modules include job basics, licensing tools, and computer skills. Additionally, we will be conducting training for center licensors on health-related issues that pertain to the new center WAC, and many center licensors will be taking the National Playground Safety Institute training in March.

The trainer has met with the four Southwest offices, which are Bremerton, Tacoma, Tumwater, and Vancouver, and discussed office training needs with the staff and supervisors. Computer training is an identified need in this region! The trainer is also meeting with each licenser to identify strengths and individual training needs. The system includes identifying strengths and training needs for support staff, supervisors, and program managers as well, and delivering training to meet those needs.

And, importantly, we are beginning to offer STARS-approved training to providers on subsidy policy and proper billing practices. Training in the SW region will take place at the Olympic Peninsula and Pierce County AEYC conferences in March.



## Background Checks Top NW Region Training Request

*By Jim Teeters, DCCEL Northwest Regional Trainer*

DCCEL Trainer Jim Teeters recently did a training need analysis among licensing units in the Northwest Region (formerly DSHS Regions 3 and 4). It is the responsibility of DCCEL to make decisions about the character and suitability of applicants as caretakers in childcare centers and homes. Licensors have requested more training on the criminal history and background checks the Division requires of all who work with children – an important part of assessing one's suitability for this work.

The background check is more than merely sorting out who has and who hasn't a criminal background. It involves a time consuming analysis of the information from references, child protective service reports, rap sheets, and any evidence (mental health reports, counseling records, etc.) that may cause the division concern if a person is placed in the care of children. The checks also involve anyone who has unsupervised access to children. One supervisor said, "Our staff needs to realize that we have both the responsibility and the authority to do this work. We should follow the "red flags" until they are resolved."

Licensors feel a great responsibility when they are asked to assess a person's suitability. They understand the importance of meeting the need for quality childcare by facilitating the licensing and approval of persons entering this vital field. However, they also feel the same pressure to protect vulnerable little children by making careful assessments.

Training for this task may include understanding the complete system of background checks – getting the big picture. Other aspects of such learning would include analysis of rap sheets, which are often somewhat cryptic and confusing. Sometimes licensors need to know when to ask further questions, request other information, and how far to probe into the situation. Licensors need to be sensitive to a person's need for privacy and protection of children. As one licensor puts it, "We often walk a thin line between wasting time and assuring parents that licensees can be trusted because we have done our job. The task of determining character and suitability can be tedious, but the assurance we have at the end makes it all worthwhile. That is why we want to become better and better at this important task."

## Going from the City to the Country

*By Mernie Graham, DCCEL Supervisor*

I've been the supervisor here in the Wenatchee office for just over a year now. I transferred from the Seattle office, where I was a home licensor for about five years. Needless to say, life is a little different here than it was in King County.

Take center licensing, for example. In our Seattle office, we had four center licensors who covered from the middle of the county north to the Snohomish County line. Kent had about the same number of center licensors who covered from the middle south to the Pierce County line. The centers located on the east side of Lake Washington were split between the two offices in some mysterious way. Many of the centers in King County were quite large and many were owned by large corporations with headquarters located out of state.

I recently was talking with our center licensor, Debbie Lorrain, about how she does her job. Note that I said our center licensor. One. We have one center licensor who is responsible for all the centers in five counties that run right up the middle of the state to the Canadian border. She covers all of Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Grant Counties, and part of Adams County. That's a lot of driving. And this is snow country. In good weather, it takes 2-1/2 to 3 hours to get to her farthest outpost in Oroville.

Debbie says that it's pretty important to do logistical planning and try to get to all the centers located in the remote regions in a given visit. (It's also important to plan your potty stops.) And, of course, as soon as she arrives at the first center,

all the rest in the area get informed of her presence.

Most of her centers are relatively small. She has about 75 altogether, only about nine have more than 100 kids. Most are under 50, some small enough to be family homes. None are corporate.

She says the biggest problem – isolation – is also the biggest plus for her. Although historically she's had few colleagues with whom to compare strategies, etc., she also has a lot of autonomy. And as Debbie likes to drive and enjoys bird watching, she has fun. She's spotted bald eagles, kestrels, merlins, lots of hawks, great blue herons and on the lower Columbia River in summertime, pelicans.

She says that resources are the biggest problem for the providers, especially for training staff. "It's fun," she says, "they need me and the resources I have – they're always glad to see me and the help I bring."

She also stated that there are special challenges in providing quality care in rural areas, which tend to have very high poverty rates, but there are also the special joys in knowing that you are doing something difficult well and that you make a difference to kids.

Debbie now has regular contact with other center licensors as we meet quarterly with all the staff in Eastern Washington and more regularly with the center staff in the Yakima, Sunnyside and Tri-Cities areas, which are also low in numbers of center staff.

# Training Perspective from Eastern Washington

By Carissa Doré, DCCEL Eastern Regional Trainer

Whew! Have I been busy or what? I started as the new Eastern Region trainer in August of this year. Since then it has been non-stop. I still can't believe how far our new program has evolved in just a few short months. We started our trainings at our Fall Conference, but the true test of the program came with the new Complaint Policy Training. It was a challenging training to do because there were many clarification questions.

I have sensed excitement, anticipation and hesitation about the new program. I think licensors want the training program to work; they just haven't had anything like it before. Our expectation is that it will help licensors to be better equipped to do their jobs and ensure consistency around the state.

Recently, I asked licensors for their thoughts about the new training program. Here are some of their responses:

Marta Hernandez, licensor in Yakima said, "I think the new training program in Eastern Washington will enable licensors to identify training needs as a group. The trainings presented by trainers will directly involve licensors with consistency throughout the regions. The sessions already planned will cover topics such as the first training we had on complaints. This training was valuable for me. I know that other sessions include SER documentation, training on policies and procedures and others,

which will be of value to perform our job duties. I believe the training program will enable licensors to gain a better appreciation of the rules and procedures that

govern WACs and also meet staff training needs by regions."

Rosemary Salinas, child care home licensor in Yakima, writes "As a fairly new licensor, I am very glad to see a structured training curriculum. I recently attended Complaint Training and gained a lot of useful information. Our Eastern Washington regional trainer, Carissa Doré, presented the content in a very structured yet informal manner. I am looking forward to going through the rest of the curriculum. I wholeheartedly believe in the concept and importance of professional development...."

Alice Anderson, previously a home licensor in the Spokane office (presently a DCCEL supervisor in Spokane), said, "The training on the Complaint Investigation Policy was great. I especially liked the open format where everyone could discuss the policy then ask questions about the meaning of, or changes in different sections."

I am as hopeful as the licensors about our new program. It shows DCCEL believes its value statement that, "we are committed to ongoing training and education for staff and child care providers." Child care providers don't have to miss out on the excitement. Besides DCCEL staff, the trainers will be providing training to child care providers on how to accurately bill for subsidy payments after January. So, it looks like I won't be slowing down anytime soon.

## Ask your LICENSOR

By DCCEL Policy Unit

**Question:** If the center does not have a three-compartment sink or a separate, adjacent sink, where do staff wash their hands before preparing food?

**Answer:** WAC 388-295-3220 states: (4) Handwashing facilities located in or adjacent to the food preparation area with handwashing procedures posted at each sink used for handwashing and followed by all persons who participate in food preparation. (5) The method to clean and sanitize equipment using (a) A two-compartment sink and an automatic dishwasher capable of reaching a temperature of 140 degrees or (b) The means to appropriately clean dishes and utensils through the use of a three-compartment sink method where sink one is used for wash, sink two is used for rinse, and sink three contains a sanitizing ingredient.

If a dishwasher is being used in the child care center, there will be at least a two-compartment sink available. A three-compartment sink setup is ideal; however, if only a two-compartment sink is available, a dishpan may be used as the "sanitize" sink. Handwashing is critical to limit the spread of disease and foodborne illness. A handwashing sink must be available and located within the food preparation area or immediately adjacent to it. One compartment of a two- or three-compartment sink should be designated as the handwashing sink. However, if only a one-compartment sink exists, then that sink would be used for handwashing and must be cleaned and sanitized between the different types of usage. This should then be outlined in the health care plan so that licensors are aware of the agreement.

**Question: Regarding Family Home Child Care:** (1) Are a provider's own children under the age of 12 counted in the overall capacity for the home? 2) Are the provider's own children allowed in areas

of the home that are not approved as part of the licensed child care? (3) Are family home providers required to treat their own children the same as other children in their care?

**Answer:** (1) A provider's own children under the age of 12 count in the capacity if they are on the premises. For example, if the provider's child is in kindergarten, that child counts in the capacity when not at school. (2) The provider's children may occasionally need the privacy of their own room. That room may or may not be available to the other children. Regardless, the provider's children can be in a part of the home that is not included in the licensed home. (3) Although it is perhaps easier on everyone if all are treated the same, there might be times when the provider needs to consider their child's individual needs and act accordingly. One caution is that no child should be at risk of harm as a result of the provider treating biological children differently than those in care.

## DSHS Offers New Phone Service for Working Connections Child Care Parents and Providers

The Department of Social and Health Services has developed a new toll-free telephone service designed to provide information to parents receiving Working Connections Child Care assistance and the providers who care for their children. This phone service became available September 2, 2003 and is the result of a collaboration between Division of Child Care and Early Learning, the Community Services Division, and the Information Technology Division.

Busy working parents and child care providers can call the Working Connections Information phone 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week and get quick information about their child care case.

Parents should call 1-877-980-9220. Providers should call 1-866-218-3244.

Parents receiving Working Connections Child Care and their child care providers can obtain the following information through the service:

- The current status of their child care case;
- What child care services are set up for payment; and
- Special messages about the child care program.

Until now, parents and providers could get the information only by contacting DSHS directly during normal business hours. Using the Working Connections

Information Phone, busy working parents and child care providers can now get basic case information anytime: weekdays, evenings and weekends.

Carol Moore, program assistant from the Lower Columbia College Headstart ECEAP site, calls the WCIP phone service throughout the month to check on families' eligibility status, copayment amount, and whether the family's case review was completed. Carol said, "Making one call to the WCIP to find out information on several families without needing to talk to someone at the Customer Service Center saves me a lot of time and energy every month."

We encourage providers to try out this new time saving information service.

To access the Working Connections Child Care Information Phone, you need:

- Your SSPS Child Care Provider Number (This is the six-digit number found on the upper-left-side of your SSPS Social Service Notice on your license, or on your SSPS Remittance Notice);
- Your Employee Identification Number or the last four digits of your Social Security Number (to set a Personal Identification Number); and
- The family's child care application number (This is the 10-digit number found on the right-hand corner of the SSPS Social Service Notice or on the WCCC award letter).

For more information on this new service provided by DSHS, contact Mary Winkler, WCIP Project Manager, at (360) 664-4861, or at [winklmm@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:winklmm@dshs.wa.gov).

Working Connections Child Care is a DSHS subsidy program that helps families with children pay for child care to find jobs, keep their jobs and get better jobs. For more information, go to

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/policy.shtml>.

## Provider Training Initiative

The Division of Child Care (DCCEL) has begun a provider training initiative regarding Working Connections subsidy-billing accuracy. We are expanding the information on our Internet Site to reach more providers.

Among the new information on the DCCEL Web site <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/> are the following:

- Updated Power Point training for "qualified trainers."  
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/ppt/licprovtrn.ppt>
- A self-quiz in which providers are guided through various situations and determine correct subsidy billing.  
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/pdf/0309subsbillquiz.pdf>
- A flier that outlines all the billing resources.  
[http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/pdf/subsidy\\_resource\\_summary.pdf](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/pdf/subsidy_resource_summary.pdf)
- Important mailings listed in chronological order. These are single-page "tips" sent periodically with the payment.  
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/providers.shtml#impprovmail>
- A Question and Answer document of the most common questions about Washington Child Care Connections.

Next winter we expect to have several DSHS staff trained to come to your provider meetings and train on accurate subsidy billing. Look for more news!

## D S H S   P R E S S   R E L E A S E

## DSHS Begins Process to Update and Clarify Child Care Rules

OLYMPIA - The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is in the early stages of proposing new rules that are designed to be more easily understood and make children safer while in licensed child care facilities.

Rachael Langen, director of DSHS' Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL), said the public has been asked to make initial comments on the proposed changes.

"These changes are being proposed due to concerns that existing rules are too vague and cause inconsistent interpretation of the rules by our licensors who inspect the homes," she said.

"We'll be sending notices to all licensed family home providers and other interested people as well as posting information on the DSHS web site <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/> and the Division of Child Care and Early Learning <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ESA/dccel/index.shtml> so people can review and comment upon these proposed regulations in detail," Langen said. "We expect to have proposed changes available for review no later than mid-March."

She added the formal comment period will be 60 days and public meetings to take testimony will be scheduled in Olympia and Spokane in late spring.

She noted some early comments about the proposed regulations have focused on child care providers' privacy rights. Comments suggest that by allowing DCCEL's licensors to inspect parts of the buildings that normally aren't used for child care, provider's rights to privacy are being violated.

"We don't want to violate anyone's rights, but the operation of a family home child care facility means we have to know if illegal or dangerous activities occur in the house or building," Langen said.

DCCEL has found child care homes and centers where illegal drugs have been stored or made, where guns and other weapons could be accessible to curious children and where other hazards exist.

"All areas to which children might have access must be safe," Langen said.

She noted some commentators have suggested the target of the new rules is to eliminate family home child care.

"Family homes offer a unique homelike child care setting, while large centers can seem too institutional to some parents. Family homes also can offer culturally appropriate care for children," Langen said.

Other criticisms of the proposed rules have focused on such issues as a ban on wading pools.

"There are solid reasons for everything we are proposing," Langen said.

"For example, a wading pool is a place where bacteria can breed. The federal Centers for Disease Control has recommended not allowing them."

There were some recommendations that were in the first draft of the proposed regulations that were removed after public comment. For example, DCCEL was considered raising the age of assistants at family homes to 16 years old. But after public comment, the minimum age was left at 14 years.

For more information about the rules and the lengthy process for obtaining public comment, go to this web site Child Care Rule Making Process [http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/pdf/Child\\_Care\\_Rule\\_Making\\_Process.pdf](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/pdf/Child_Care_Rule_Making_Process.pdf).